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It is also a form of support during dark days for cancer patients.

When Cindy was first diagnosed with cancer the couple did not know where to turn.

John and Cindy's daughters were five and eight-years-old when their mum fell sick.

Telling their children about the illness was not easy for the couple.

"That's probably the hardest thing," John said.

"I remember the first time we ever sat down to tell them.

"Our parenting style was always to be open and honest with the kids.

"And from when Cindy was diagnosed, we basically sat them down and told them.

"Not giving them too much

information but giving them enough so that they were prepared."

John's daughters gave him strength during Cindy's illness and after she passed away.

"It is amazing how resilient children are," he said.

"You live in fear. It was our worst thing thinking, 'okay, you're diagnosed, now how do you sit down and tell the children?'

"I'm lucky that we have two very grounded children.

"I always say, 'you can have a bad five minutes; you can have a bad hour; but hang around, it will improve'."

John and Cindy were lucky that they both had good careers and could cope financially.

But the support of their community was still immeasurable.

"It was just through Cindy's

illness that we could see gaps where people needed assistance and ladies that she came across were struggling in various areas.

"I resisted, like a lot of people do initially, the support from outside. But people want to help.

"I've always been a hands-on, home dad, but it was nice then to realise I didn't need to do that cooking."

John established the foundation with family friend Kylie Perkin.

The foundation is still "very grass roots" and operates out of a home office, which John says "we've well and truly outgrown".

"Not everyone needs help. But there are people out there with very sad stories. To be able to help them is fantastic," John said.



Cr Debbie Blumel with Dr Colin Dicks.

## New clinic can treat 100 daily

**U**NLIKE most businesses, the owners of Oceania Oncology wish they never had any customers.

But the sad truth is cancer is prevalent in our society and it gives us all peace of mind to know the technology is available if we ever need to use it.

Dr Marcel Knesl and Dr Colin Dicks have started a new oncology clinic on Wisers Road at Maroochydore, which uses radiology in cancer treatment.

Dr Knesl said there

were more than 1000 people diagnosed with cancer on the Sunshine Coast every year.

Of people diagnosed with cancer, Dr Knesl said at least 55% would need radiotherapy.

The new clinic has two linear accelerators – radiation machines that can treat up to 100 cancer patients a day.

Treatment can take between four to six weeks. The clinic will hold an open day from 10am to 1pm today as part of cancer awareness month.

– KIERAN CAMPBELL